



Contacts:

Carlton Owen  
Sustainable Forestry Board  
(864) 967-7684

Jason Anderson  
Conservation International  
(202) 912-1464

Mike Horak  
The Nature Conservancy  
703-841-8105

## **Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard Enhanced With New Measures To Protect Biodiversity**

***Provisions Include Commitments from North American Forest Products Industry  
to Promote Global Forest Conservation***

---

Washington, DC, July 2, 2002 – The Sustainable Forestry Board (SFB) today announced stronger provisions for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard (SFIS), which will be applied to more than 60 million acres in the United States and Canada. The American Forest & Paper Association, the largest U.S. timber industry trade association whose members include manufacturers of over 80 percent of the paper, wood and forest products produced in the United States, will require all its members to apply the standard to their certified operations.

The Sustainable Forestry Board is an independent group of conservationists, forestry industry leaders, academicians and other experts. The new standards, which go beyond current federal endangered species legislation, will help identify and protect imperiled species and sites on industry-managed lands in North America, combat illegal logging internationally, and promote natural forest conservation in the biodiversity hotspots and major wilderness areas.

“For nearly a year, the SFB has been collaborating with scientists, foresters, the conservation community, private landowners and the forest products industry to improve the SFI Standard in order to enhance the identification and protection of forests with exceptional conservation value,” said Mr. Colin Moseley, Chairman of the SFB and Chairman of Simpson Investment Company. “For participants in the SFI program, these new enhancements represent a significant step forward in the protection of imperiled forests. This further demonstrates how the SFI program is committed to being one of the world’s most credible and successful sustainable forestry and certification programs.”

In designing the changes to the SFI standard for North America, SFB members worked with NatureServe, a non-profit scientific organization that is a leading provider of high-quality information about species and ecosystems that make up the natural world.

Under these new measures, designed specifically to address biodiversity protection in commercial forest operations, companies seeking SFI certification in North America will develop and implement plans for protection of sites containing imperiled plants, animals, and ecological communities. These plans will be based on conservation status ranking information obtained from organizations such as NatureServe and its network of Natural Heritage programs, which gather and distribute information about biodiversity found within all 50 states and ten

Canadian provinces. Plans may also be developed in collaboration with other stakeholders, which could employ strategies such as conservation land sales, easements or exchanges.

“This is an important step in a process of protecting forests with exceptional conservation value, and is consistent with the philosophy of continuous improvement of the SFI standard. We recognize these provisions as a major step forward for the standard, and look forward to continuing to work on these issues with the forest products industry,” said Steve McCormick, President and CEO of The Nature Conservancy and SFB Board Member.

As an additional requirement for certification, companies participating in the SFI program will implement international wood procurement policies to help prevent illegal logging and promote conservation of biodiversity hotspots and major tropical wilderness areas. The 25 biodiversity hotspots cover just 1.4 percent of the Earth’s land surface, yet harbor more than 60 percent of total terrestrial biodiversity. Under extreme threat, many hotspots have lost more than 90 percent of their original natural habitat.

“These enhancements demonstrate that leaders in the North American forest products industry are willing to make a major effort to protect the world’s biologically richest and most endangered forests,” said Peter Seligmann, Chairman and CEO of Conservation International and SFB Board Member. “The SFI Standard now makes it explicit that program participants will work with governments, conservation organizations and others in alliances to stop illegal logging and promote the conservation of biodiversity hotspots and major tropical wilderness areas. These new commitments present major opportunities for partnership between the business and conservation communities.”

Today’s action by the SFB complements recent provisions approved by the Board to tighten environmental standards on industrial forests, for example, by requiring program participants to minimize road construction and chemical inputs. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative program is a voluntary system of forest management, environmental and conservation practices for wildlife and water quality protection, biodiversity conservation, harvesting practices and a wide range of other conservation goals.

“This is an historic change to the SFI Standard,” said W. Henson Moore, President and CEO of the American Forest & Paper Association. “Under these new provisions, our members are making a major commitment to use good science to meet conservation objectives.”

###

**About the Sustainable Forestry Board:** *The Sustainable Forestry Board was chartered as an independent body in July of 2000 to oversee development and continuous improvement of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Program Standard, associated certification processes and procedures and program quality control mechanisms. On January 22nd the SFB filed Articles of Incorporation as a separate corporation, the Sustainable Forestry Board, Inc. Applications have also been filed with the IRS seeking 501(c) 3 nonprofit status. The 15-member Board consists of 1/3 SFI Program Participants; 1/3rd conservation & environmental community interests; and 1/3rd broader forestry community representation.*